FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, July 9, 2015



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FRANKLIN COUNTY EARNS NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR WORKFORCE INNOVATION TRAINING GRANT (WIT-G) PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Franklin County, Ohio has been recognized with an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The awards honor innovative, effective county government programs that enhance services for residents.

NACo recognized Franklin County's Workforce Innovation Training Grant (WIT-G) program in the category of *Employment and Training for County Residents*. Franklin County established the WIT-G program to provide funding to local companies to train new employees in return for a commitment by the employer to hire an agreed upon number of new staff and develop innovative and new workforce training solutions to address their employment needs.

"The WIT-G grants have been a great success for connecting Franklin County residents and employers," said Commission President Marilyn Brown. "For a targeted, modest investment, we've been able to support local businesses, encourage them to hire more Franklin County workers, and pump millions of dollars into our Central Ohio economy."

Since the program's inception in 2012, Franklin County has approved seven Workforce Innovation Training grants with local businesses totaling more than \$752,000. The Commissioners' Economic Development and Planning Department administers the grants, ensuring that recipients are living up to their end of the bargain by hiring the new employees to which they've committed, and using the funds to train those workers for the future.

"As President of our Board in 2012, I immediately saw the value of this training grant," Commissioner Brooks said. "As we continue to thrive in a global economy, the grants help meet the fierce competition our workers and businesses confront every day. We are thrilled to see NACo acknowledge this information".

The grants are expected to result in more than 2,100 new local hires in Franklin County.

Commissioner John O'Grady, who plans to attend and accept the award of Franklin County's behalf added, "These WIT-G grants are a great way for us to invest in local businesses and our Franklin County workforce. It's this kind of innovation in government

and economic development that is helping to keep Franklin County such a great place to live, work, and do business."

NACo President Riki Hokama, council member, Maui County, Hawaii, said, "The National Association of Counties applauds county governments that are embracing innovative and more effective ways to serve their constituents. The Achievement Awards recognize counties' outstanding efforts to strengthen services and deliver results for residents across the country."

Nationally, awards are given in 21 different categories that reflect the vast, comprehensive services counties provide. The categories include children and youth, criminal justice, county administration, environmental protection, information technology, health, civic engagement and many more.

The awards will be presented at NACo's 2015 Annual Conference and Exposition July 10–13 in Mecklenburg County, N.C.

Started in 1970, NACo's annual Achievement Award Program is designed to recognize innovative county government programs. Each nominee is judged on its own merits and not against other applications received.

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About NACo:

The National Association of Counties (NACo) unites America's 3,069 county governments. Founded in 1935, NACo brings county officials together to advocate with a collective voice on national policy, exchange ideas and build new leadership skills, pursue transformational county solutions, enrich the public's understanding of county government and exercise exemplary leadership in public service. Learn more at www.naco.org

For more information on the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, call the Office of Public Affairs at (614) 525-3322 or visit www.franklincountyohio.gov/commissioners.